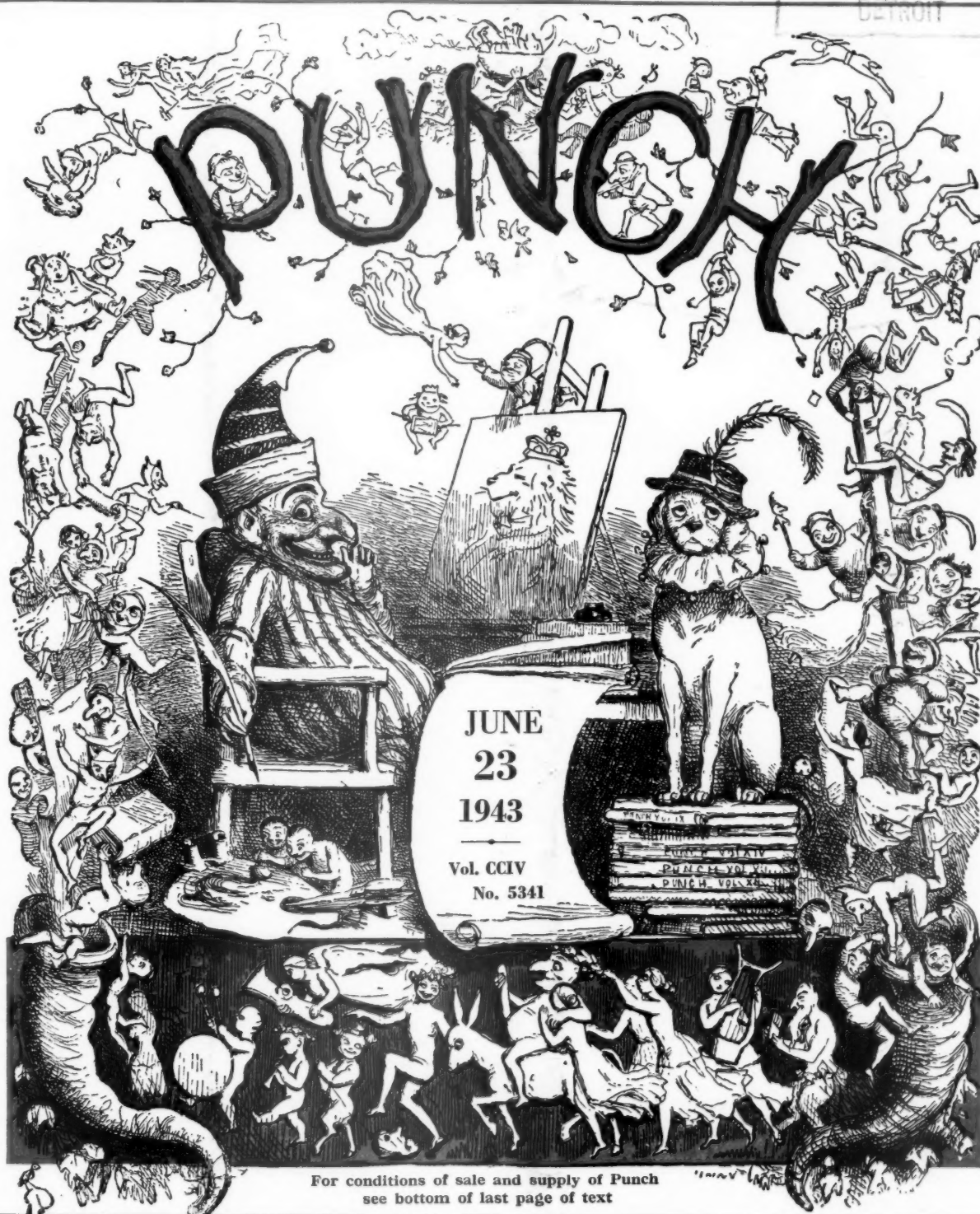


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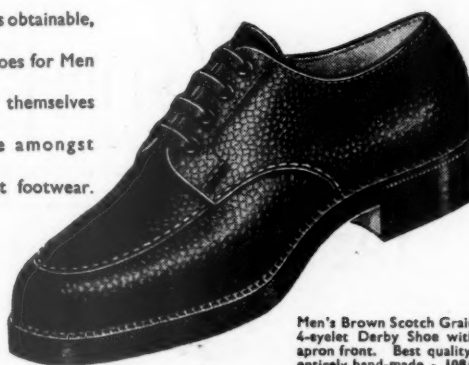
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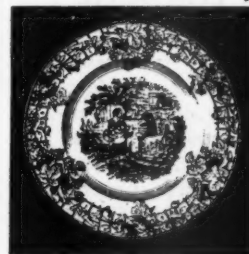
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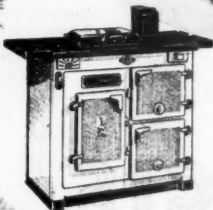
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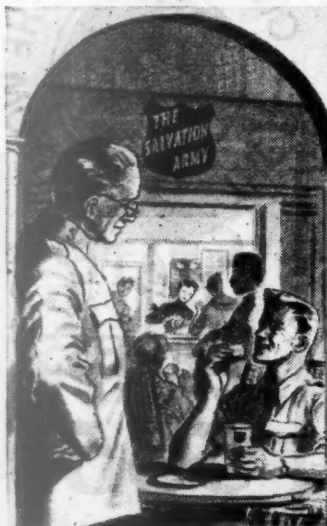


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Just honest-to-goodness tobacco
20 for 2/4 ★ 10 for 1/2

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BENONAZI, DERNA, TRIPOLI —

YESTERDAY, they were battles—
to-day, Rest Camps, Bases, Leave
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Salvation Army Clubs in Egypt, North Africa, Syria, Iraq, Palestine, as well as those in Libya and Cyrenaica, are 'home' to thousands of Servicemen. They would rather spend their leave at home, of course, but when that can't be done, the friendly, home-like atmosphere of The Salvation Army Club makes a very welcome substitute.

**SOON NEW FRONTS WILL MEAN
EVEN GREATER DEMANDS ON
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Your gift will help us to serve the Services.

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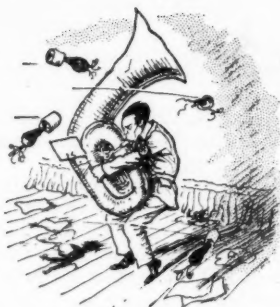
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21^d PACKET MAKES
2 2 (separate) PINTS
Still the same high quality
Sold by all good grocers.





PUNCH

OR

THE LONDON CHARIVARI



Vol. CCIV No. 5341

June 23 1943

Charivaria

WRITING in a Birmingham newspaper a correspondent states that table-tennis isn't what it used to be thirty years ago. In those days of course it was ping-pong.

In the opinion of a headmaster the modern boy does not hide behind his mother's skirts. Neither does his mother.



"I have known a pair of birds become very friendly with a cuckoo who invaded their nest," says a Frinton ornithologist. The quislings!

Criminals, we are told, do a lot of physical training in order to keep fit. Even the puniest of jewel-thieves has been known to skip with a rope of pearls.

We read that the foundations of the largest shadow factory on earth have recently been laid down. We fail to see where else they could have been laid.

"Good organisation enabled the lengthy programme to be carried through with a maximum of delay."—*New Zealand Paper*.

Which takes time, mind you.

"With five inches of water," says a correspondent, "I find it better to soap myself before entering the bath and then rinse and soak." In fact an amphibious operation.

According to a Swiss source it is still possible that Spain might join the Axis. As a country member?

"HOW TO CLIP GERMANY'S CLAWS

The answer is 'Never Again!'—*Answers*.

We should say the answer was "regularly."

Hitler was recently presented with a tiger-skin rug. Now if the carpet bit the Fuehrer, that *would* be news.

"Let Nature assist in your gardening tasks," advises a writer. Trim your hedge in a strong wind and you won't have to sweep up the clippings.



Italy has recognized Argentina. We predict that before long Argentina will have great difficulty in recognizing Italy.

An Edinburgh paper says "He would be a very foolish tipster indeed who made the Axis his nap selection for victory." They always were outsiders, of course.

When a Luton man was summoned for mixing paraffin with petrol in his car a policeman said he noticed the paraffin smell coming from the exhaust. He was quickly on the scent.



England Revisited

IT has always been a pastoral line, but now it seems more pastoral than ever. Climbing between W— and L— through some of the quietest landscape in the world, where the little rivers seem lost in a profundity of green, the engine stops now and then with a sigh of satisfaction at a station without a vestige of a name, and the station-master, grey-haired but sprightly for her years, turns out to greet us with a young daughter, a small boy and a dog.

Even at W—, which is comparatively metropolitan, I had been charmed to see the porters cleaning railway carriages amid cries of elfin laughter, flicking water at each other from their mops as they worked. "Don't you dare do that again, Winifred," said one. But two other porters, more serious, less fairylike, were feeding tied calves with bowls of milk and asking them whether they missed their mothers, then, poor little things. The young guard with well-waved hair is dressed in a silk blouse, blue trousers and rather high-heeled shoes; she has not neglected her lipstick and waves her green flag with graceful and conscious art.

In the hope of gaining a new answer I have asked her the question we always ask at L—: Is there any real reason why we should be turned out of our carriage for forty minutes, leaving our luggage inside it while the train goes away to the shunting yards and returns in the fullness of time to the same place at the same platform, allowing us to return to the same compartment again? But she has been well-drilled. It is the company's rule, she says. "Supposing there was to be an accident while the train was in the shunting yards and you inside, don't you see."

I don't see and I never have. Long ago, I suspect, some desperate passenger was allowed to stay inside his carriage during this awful manoeuvre and stole the fly-wheel of an engine or a piston-rod or carved his name on the carriage door.

It had been my bright idea that we would eat the lunch we carried in a wicker basket while we dallied in the shunting yards. But it was not to be. We have our lunch on the platform, where there are some more tethered calves, and break the laws of England by giving them a sandwich to lick. They like the salt. Outside on the burning road a huge bull is being led past a halted detachment of Bren carriers which it eyes with the deepest disdain.

* * * * *

Oh, of course, it is Sunday.

One of the curiosities of the cottage is that if you stop and put your head out of the bedroom window at the back where the garage is, you find your face almost on a level with the face of anyone who is standing there, and only a yard or two away.

Hearing the voice of Mr. Thomas while I shave, I look out to say good morning and observe that he is drilling the Home Guard. I had forgotten that he is using my garage as his ammunition depot and the H.Q. of his troops. There are only five of them but he has begun to address them loudly as "Platoon," when he sees my eyes and nose surrounded by a fringe of soap, and interrupts himself to pass the time of day. I ask what he thinks of my garden, in front, and he says that it is in poor shape and he wishes he had had time to attend to it a bit. I withdraw and the formal parade continues, but I have managed to catch the

eye of the principal poacher, which is all to the good, because he allows me some latitude about the fishing while I am known to be in residence, so to speak.

Mrs. Thomas is cooking the breakfast and says that the mice have been at the books again. It seems that they like *Chambers's Encyclopædia* most, but they are not very scholarly, and beginning at the end have only made TEIN to ZYRI and SACR to TEIGN really illegible, and I think I can do without these volumes while I am here.

* * * * *

The garden is really amazing. Three-quarters of it is filled with buttercups and wild carrot—the latter nearly breast-high—but pink and blue lupins and purple irises and peonies stand triumphant over the wild riot, and there is a white rose bush with domesticated blossoms at the top which has begun to sprout common hedge-roses near the stem. All the vegetables have vanished in the underwoods.

Wondering whether a few hand-grenades from the garage would not be better than a spade and fork to begin breaking up the wilderness, I have seen a rather curiously dressed man in the lane. He has taken Mrs. Thomas's bicycle which she left leaning against the cottage wall and is trying to ride about on it. I tell her about this, but she does not seem to mind. She says it is only one of the Italian prisoners working at the farm, and he is always doing it. "And I've brought you some eggs," she says. Mrs. Thomas is always "bringing some eggs." It is a gesture which in London would cause a good deal of surprise, but in this valley none. I ask her whether it would be possible to get an Italian prisoner to deal with my garden, but she says I must ask Mr. Williams about that. One has to ask Mr. Williams about everything here because he farms all the land from the bridge to the ford. I cannot find Mr. Williams for he is a very busy man, but I find Mrs. Williams.

She has no ideas about Italian prisoners as weed-destroyers, but is having a jumble sale soon and would I have anything to give her for it. I ask whether *Chambers's Encyclopædia* TEIN to ZYRI and SACR to TEIGN would be any good. She thinks they are more by way of being salvage than jumble, and then I remember a very old pair of grey flannel trousers which have been patched so often owing to barbed-wire and moths that they could scarcely have been respectable in the time of Offa or the Wars of the Roses, or any of the other convulsions that have shaken the Border shires. She believes that they would do splendidly. They can be cut up and stuffed for toy elephants, she declares. There is a note of Imperialism about this that pleases me, and I say I will sacrifice them willingly.

After breakfast, which even judging by the sun I think is rather late, I hasten to see the rabbit-catcher. He admits that the war has been rather good for rabbit-catching on the whole. But the Government, he complains, have "put men out on the hills" who are interfering with his old monopoly. Seeing that he can scarcely put a foot down without scaring a young rabbit, I suggest that he is being rather unfair to the Government, mention our victories in North Africa, the bombing of the Rhineland and Pantellaria. He admits that these are brighter aspects of our war-effort, and promises to let me have two rabbits in exchange for some trout. The church bell rings loudly



THE KING IN AFRICA



"I'm sorry, but I can't possibly mend this before the eve of Martinmas."

through the valley for the first and only service of the day. This is at 3 P.M. We dine on Spam.

* * * * *

There is no night.

At about 2 A.M. Double Summer Time the foxes are barking and the cuckoo begins. These sounds merge imperceptibly at dawn with the stamping of horses and the lowing of cattle, the bleat of lambs and the throbbing of unheeded aeroplanes, which are more numerous than mayfly on the stream. There is, of course, no weather, which is a handicap to anyone writing about this part of England. One can merely say that it comes and goes considerably. Sun, wind or rain, I am sorry later on that I left my lunch for a moment under an alder while I am trying a difficult pool. It was an austere lunch, but a bullock has seen fit to eat it. The day wears on. Apparently the Italian prisoners are working at the quarries as well as at the farm. They ride home shouting and laughing with glee along the road from the bridge in open trucks, while I go on fishing for food. . . . I thought so. If there are any more barbed-wire fences on hand to climb over as this one, there will be more elephants for Mrs. Williams' jumble sale.

* * * * *

The postman has come. This only happens once a day.

She carries a spring-balance in a metal case which is very useful for weighing parcels—or trout. I have asked her to have a cup of tea and look at my lupins while I answer the mail. EVOE.

WE pray that it may not be long before a European tyranny worse than Napoleon's crashes to its doom and we can look back at the time when Britain alone barred the way to the evil hordes and say again with

WILLIAM PITT

"England has saved herself by her exertions and Europe by her example."

We do not know how far distant that day is; but we do know that the needs of the Fighting Forces are greater than ever. They need everything we can give. Have you given all you can spare to PUNCH COMFORTS FUND? Every penny means that some fighting man somewhere can have more of the small comforts that mean so much. Send to-day to PUNCH COMFORTS FUND, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.

Action in the Event of Fire

HERE, then, am I once more flying my little aeroplane in company with the gentleman in the beautiful black helmet.

To-day I am especially glad to find that I am not alone, for the practice we are about to do as listed on the type-written syllabus so impressively affixed to the front page of my Log Book is alarmingly worded—"ACTION IN THE EVENT OF FIRE."

I am still further disconcerted to notice that the aeroplane in which we now find ourselves is of considerably older vintage than any which I have flown hitherto. This may of course be accident—or it may be design.

We are, at the moment, at a height of approximately two thousand feet, and the voice that I have come to know so well is reciting new lines of "patter" which I must endeavour to absorb.

I am being told to imagine that the aeroplane is on fire and to prepare myself to take the necessary action against this distressing occurrence.

Just how much I am to use my imagination has not been made clear. If I am to use it to the fullest extent of its considerable capacity and really conceive myself surrounded by licking tongues of flame, I do not need to consider in any way the sort of preparation I should at this moment be taking. In view of the fact that I have to summon all my courage to approach a smouldering bonfire and have actually been known to cry aloud on an occasion when my hand accidentally came into contact with a lukewarm electric-toaster, I have no doubt whatever that should the situation have indeed arisen which the gentleman in front is asking me to presume, I should be over the side of this sizzling aeroplane and pulling frantically at the rip-cord of my parachute at the very first sign.

It appears, however, that the gentleman in the beautiful black helmet would regard the whole matter with an air of superb calm.

I do not doubt it.

I have every confidence that if the aeroplane in which we are now sitting suddenly decided to end its twelve years of miserable existence by disintegrating into a thousand pieces so that the two of us were left sitting in the atmosphere entirely unsupported by any visible means, the gentleman in front of me would nonchalantly deliver the "patter" covering forced-landings in extreme circumstances and

proceed to put his suggestions into practice with every possible success.

According to the information now reaching my straining ears, the first action I must take is to turn off the petrol and open the throttle fully in order to use up that which remains in the carburettor as speedily as possible.

I am a little uncertain as to whether we are still in the world of make-believe or if I really am supposed to be taking action according to these instructions. I feel quite sure that some remark has been made to clarify the position, but I think at the time I was in a slight state of coma. I hesitate to question the gentleman, as by so drawing his attention to my unforgivable preoccupation I shall lay myself open to his stern disapproval.

Taking all in all and biased in my decision by the fact that he has, I perceive, opened the throttle himself, I will presume that it is indeed his intention that the petrol should be turned off. No longer in doubt, therefore, I reach for the knob and with a smart movement of the left hand push it hard forward.

It now appears that for the sake of convenience it has been decided to assume that it is the right-hand side of our aeroplane that has caught fire, and in consequence thereof we are to side-slip to the left away from the flames.

How ingenious!

Suiting the action to the words, the gentleman in the beautiful black helmet is already putting the machine into the orthodox attitude and side-slipping violently towards the ground.

It seems that there are now only three things left for us to do. We must look out for a suitable field in which to land: we must switch off as soon as the engine stops: and we must make use of the fire-extinguisher to the best of our limited ability.

I am doubtful of this last.

To visualize myself making merry with this battered red cylinder with the gangrenous-looking brass top that resides on the floor of the cockpit just below my right knee, and at the same time to be aiming my aeroplane with its fan no longer rotating at a field the size of a pocket handkerchief, is more than even my extensive imagination can conjure up.

There is now a slight spluttering from the engine and, like a flash, showing my quick response to the instructions I have just received, I thrust my hand outside the cockpit and rest the fingers lightly on the

switches. With a final cough the engine stops and, switching off, I next occupy myself by wrenching the fire-extinguisher from its bracket and brandishing it above my head in the hope that the gentleman will catch sight of it in the reflecting mirror on the centre section strut and appreciate how competent I am to deal with this disastrous situation.

I notice that we have now—rather suddenly, I thought—recovered from our side-slip. There is a deathly stillness, accentuated by our silent engine.

Is there, I wonder, anything I have omitted to do?

Surely he does not intend me to complete the demonstration by actually using the fire-extinguisher?

Ah, he is speaking—nay, rather is he shouting.

He is asking me what I have done. I have great pride in telling him.

What is that? He did not intend me to do the thing literally?

Oh, misery me . . . !

Have I seen a field? he says. Yes, I have seen several, but none that I should like to choose for the purpose of forced-landing our aeroplane.

It appears that he himself has seen one and that his question was, in a broad sense, rhetorical, using even this untimely opportunity to test my competence to deal with an emergency. . . .

As we near the ground I see for the first time a field of considerable dimensions which seems hitherto to have escaped my notice.

With enviable skill the gentleman in the beautiful black helmet has judged his approach and is touching down without so much as a tremor on the air-frame. . . .

He is now climbing out and has, I fear, many things to say to me. I sit with bowed head ready for the onslaught.

There seems, however, to be some delay in his delivery. The words must assuredly be choking in his throat, rendering him close to a state of asphyxia.

With an effort I raise my head and regard him gloomily. To my astonishment I notice that behind those hard grey eyes there is the suspicion of a smile.

Is it that perhaps after all he harbours some small gratitude towards me for having thus presented him with the opportunity to demonstrate his undoubted skill?

I really believe he does. . . .

At the Pictures

THE GOOD COLONEL

The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp (Directors: MICHAEL POWELL and EMERIC PRESSBURGER—who also produced, and wrote the story) is too long, and has a misleading title; but there is not very much else to be said against it. The title is misleading because one expects—or one would expect, if one hadn't read the notices—a more or less satirical work on the character invented and immortalized by DAVID LOW, whereas what one gets is a careful, intelligently-done and more or less serious account of the life of a conscientious, brave and not even dull-witted British Army officer whose latter-day Conservatism is little more than the common result of the inevitable hardening of by no means unusual arteries. In other words *Colonel Blimp* was always Blimpish even as a young man, and at any moment there are always plenty of subaltern *Blimps*; but the only trouble with *Candy*, in this story, is that he clings to the belief that right is might, that those who fight fair will win because of that fact no matter what the behaviour of their opponents. The tendency to think this is, to be sure, constitutional; but I don't think it was in the constitution of the original *Colonel Blimp*.

All the same, two hours and three-quarters is rather too much. (There seems to be no common denominator in these characters who are allowed more than a hundred and fifty minutes for their biographies: the great ZIEGFELD, *Scarlett O'Hara*, *Clive Wynne-Candy*...) I don't wish to imply that the piece is not continuously entertaining: it has been done with remarkable skill and intelligence in all departments, and personally I did not dislike anything about it but the momentary piece of hokum with which it ends (that sudden, old-man's salute, slipped in to overcharge the emotional atmosphere and produce the electric crackle of applause as the picture fades). The colour is exceedingly good and much

of the film is a pleasure for the eye, though the last-war scenes look artificial. ROGER LIVESEY is admirable as the developing *Colonel*, DEBORAH KERR skilfully differentiates between three girls who look exactly alike; and ANTON WALBROOK is a German so sympathetic as to have worried some of the newspapers.

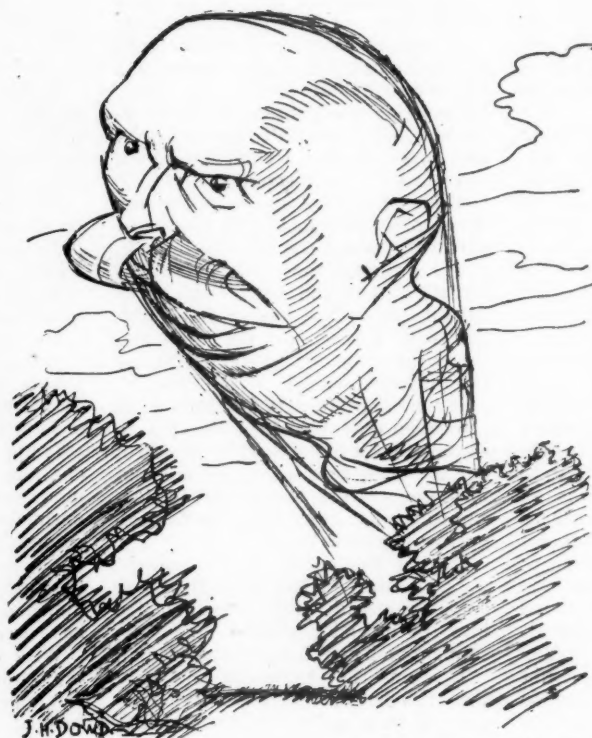
Now for a picture in which BRIAN DONLEVY, of all people, is called upon to make such weighty remarks as

indeed, and brilliantly done. There is some other excellent small-part playing which livens up a few of the sequences we know so well; and the straightforward "chase" part of the story is as effective as a well-directed man-hunt always is—more so than usual, in fact, since the man-hunt is Mr. LANG's directorial speciality and by this time he knows how to get more out of it than anyone else. But I don't take much pleasure in this kind of film: the constant insistence upon brutality—the details of brutality—sours the whole thing.

For a lesson in the way this kind of story should be told, see the Crown Film Unit's *The Silent Village* (Director: HUMPHREY JENNINGS), which, basically about the same thing, manages to be ten times as moving, impressive and memorable in a quarter the length. This, too, is about the murder of Heydrich; but it has the sense to understate instead of underlining. The mining village of Cwmgiedd acts as the mining village of Lidice, and we see what would have happened in Wales very much as it did happen in Czechoslovakia. There are no professional actors: these are all the people of the Swansea and Dulais valleys. The sense of brutal oppression is there, the misery and resentment of the people under it is no less faithfully conveyed than in the Lang film; but it is done without any of the Lang film's smart, monocled, jack-booted toughs, without any of the Lang film's careful and obvious and detailed (and familiar) displays of exactly what

sort of violence and intellectual and physical torment the Nazi oppressors employ. In my view this makes the short Jennings picture better than the long Lang picture; though not, of course, in the view of the expectant queues outside the Tivoli.

Another comparatively short film must have a word here: PAUL ROTH's documentary *World of Plenty*, which runs for nearly an hour and is about the problem of food distribution. It is stimulating, informative and a first-rate basis for discussion. R. M.



(The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp)

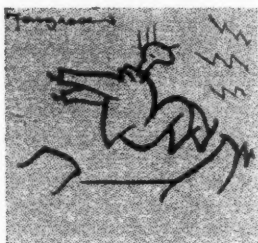
FACING THE CRITICAL WIND

Col. Blimp ROGER LIVESEY

"We are faced with two different problems, each dependent upon the other"—a work which otherwise may be concisely summed up as one of those films the credit titles of which are displayed against a background of sinister shadows moving across brick walls.

For me, most of the mitigating moments in *Hangmen Also Die* (Director: FRITZ LANG) were contributed by ALEXANDER GRANACH, who has a fine time as the beer-drinking, bowler-hatted Gestapo Inspector Alois Gruber—a fruity part

When next you hear the sirens in the middle of the night, give a thought to the brave warden who, for your protection—



leaps out of bed—



curls himself into his uniform—



grabs his bat—



and his torch—

Mess Accounts

LIEUTENANT Simpson runs our Officers' Mess. He took it over from Lieutenant Hock about two months ago, after a rather sordid argument about pickled onions. Lieutenant Simpson happened to remark one night at dinner that he couldn't see how the Mess President (Lieutenant Hock) managed to spend our five piastres a day, since we lived almost entirely on rations. Hock took umbrage, and pointed out that there was a pot of pickled onions on the table, and that table-cloths and tin-openers had to be paid for. He concluded with the remark that if Simpson thought he could make a better job of being Mess President he was welcome to try.

So Simpson took over, and made, if possible, a bigger failure of it than Hock. Even pickled onions disappeared from the table, and when we wanted gin there was only whisky, and when we wanted whisky there was only gin, and when we were broadminded enough to say that we would put up with either there was usually nothing but a bottle of methylated spirits for lighting the pressure-lamp which Simpson hoped to buy in Cairo if he ever managed to borrow transport on a day that wasn't the Feast of Something, when all the dealers in pressure-lamps knock off.

When Simpson took over from Hock he naturally asked for the accounts, and a list of Mess property at cost, less depreciation. Hock gave him the account-book, which was quite easy to understand once Simpson had learned that Hock's sixes and fives were exactly alike and that two tins of sardines bought during the Company's brief sojourn in Palestine last year had not been converted from Palestine money to piastres, but still retained, as it were, their Palestinian nationality.

"But as for a list of Mess property at cost less depreciation," said Hock, rather evasively, "the one I had when I took over the accounts from Captain McLewis was lost in the great sandstorm we had in October. When the Audit Board comes round, you can make out another."

So when the Audit Board was due to visit us Simpson started to make a list.

"Five chairs," he said, glancing round the Mess; "I wonder what they cost and how much they have depreciated?"

"Don't put this one down," said Major Fibbing, "it's my own. I bought it from the late major for fifty piastres and a small mirror that turned out rather a white elephant, as the silver-stuff flaked off."

"And the two wicker ones," said Captain Foxglove, "we won at Tobruk. So there's only the green chair with the leg missing and the wooden one with the very depreciated seat."

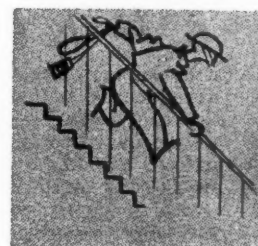
The Mess clock, it appeared, really belonged to one of the native sergeants named Wabonga Nabonga, who had gone to hospital and left it in the Major's care. Of the eight cups and nine saucers, one cup and three saucers had been borrowed from the sergeants' mess in exchange for a coffee-pot, which the C.S.M. had since broken during Sergeant's Park's birthday celebration.

"All that is straightforward enough," said Major Fibbing, "but when you come to the cutlery . . ."

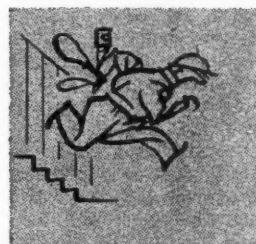
Simpson would probably have ended up with a court-martial, but luckily another sandstorm arrived concurrently with the Audit Board, and when Simpson explained that his detailed list of Mess Property at Cost less Depreciation had been swept away, the Board, which was already late for lunch, agreed to accept a round figure.



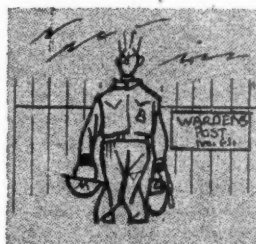
and, of course, his respirator—



hurtles downstairs—



and belts madly round to his post—



arriving just in time to hear the "All Clear."



"And then we'll have that little dream cottage with a tiny white gate, roses round the door and a hundred acres of arable at the back."

H. J. Talking

I HAVE never climbed mountains much, though when they have occurred in the course of a walk I have not shunned them. Many people make a great labour of mountaineering, and carry picks, axes, sleighs, skis and skates, but I am not sufficiently good at it to be able to handicap myself, and usually wear ordinary walking things and shoes with rubber suckers on them. A small valve worked by a string lets air in and out of these as wanted. When I come to a difficult bit the suckers prevent my falling and the valves, carefully manipulated, enable me to move each leg in turn. Bridges of rock I usually cross hanging downwards, and rocky slopes at right-angles. Ice can be melted quite easily, if you have the kind of suckers that don't suck ice, with a large cigarette-lighter. Snow is certainly a trouble, as it gets very deep in some mountains, but being a scientist I worked out that the trouble with snow is that it is not compressed enough to walk on. I thought of hiring a steam-roller to precede me, but it turned out that it would need enormous suckers when going up a steep cliff-face, and I considered that these might be thought ostentatious and in bad taste. Also, if it was always in front of me it would spoil the view. I then worked out that large flat things sink more slowly through snow than small thick ones, so that the obvious course was to take hurdles. The objection to these seemed to be that they would be even more burdensome to carry than ice-picks, but it occurred to me that they could be sent to the places where they were required by post and all I should have to do would be to receive them on the spot—not much of a hardship, as postmen are generally punctual.

One problem about mountains is what to do when one gets to the top. Personally I usually like to push on with my walk, but among enthusiasts to stop as long as ten minutes is *de rigueur*. If there is a dawn or a sunrise or a view, one can look at it joyfully enough, but if, as usual, there is merely a mist, apart from pointing out that it is probably a cloud and wondering what kind of cloud it is, there is very little to do. It is rare to find anything of architectural interest, and unless one happens to be on a

frontier, where the Customs help to pass the time pleasantly, it seems best to read. I do not recommend food, as the cloud always seems to get in some mysterious way into the sandwiches. I usually carry *Whitaker's Almanack* to fill in odd times, as I memorize the Ministers' salaries, which always seem to be of much more interest than cricket averages.

The children have never shown much disposition for sport, asking pertinently enough what there is in it for them. We have pointed out that high prices are paid for good footballers and that cricketers are frequently invited to stay in country houses and can subsequently get free meals from those who wish to know what country houses are like. B. Smith thinks the team-spirit is important because it teaches other people not to let you down: but no team we can find will have the twins, as they are very argumentative and quarrel with the crowd. Football crowds are easy to quarrel with, but most cricket crowds are good-tempered and working them up distracts the twins from the game. We once got them into a Charity match at Lord's by bribery and my wife's inviting the committee to a dinner which went on and on until they agreed to give our chicks a place; but as soon as they went out to field they made a dead-set at the people in the pavilion, who were difficult to rouse until compared to various kinds of fish.

In one match, a chess one, the twins were playing against a very expensive school where it was bad form to display any interest in games and there was no crowd for quarrelling with. The twins under this provocation departed from their usual rule that their opponents themselves should be respected and screeched accusations against them, among such being that the chessmen had been loaded, they confusing them with dice. This school had received many good legacies, but these were for the support not of scholars but of the staff. In fact the usual proportion of boys to masters was reversed. It was a teachers' paradise. Obstreperous boys might be taken by no fewer than ten men at once. There was, however, no endowment for a headmaster, who was paid by a whip-round in the Common-room at the end of each term, he being kept well under in consequence. It is not surprising that appointments to this school were much sought after. Candidates were expected to be, above all, convivial, and able to spend money with a splash. The school motto was "Gaudeant Magistri."



"The-democratic slave Press states that the Fuehrer's speeches have lost their usual bombast and braggadocio—THIS IS ANOTHER PLUTOCRATIC LIE!"

Faces in Cabs

I AM always falling in love with faces in cabs. Cool, mysterious women with flower-like faces and small black hats flash past me, and I am lost. I surrender unconditionally. My sole desire is to be whirling away in that taxi, instead of waiting inconsolably for a bus. To be strictly honest, I have this desire to be whirled away in a taxi whenever I am waiting for a bus, whether there is a flower-like face in it or no (I mean in the cab, of course. One does not see flower-like faces in buses). But the motive is different.

Generally the lovely women I see in cabs are sitting well back in the recesses of the vehicle, modestly withdrawn; but sometimes they lean forward, gazing in an anxious way at the driver's back and drumming slim fingers on the thing the window goes down into when it's lowered. I cannot bear to see them worried like this. I have no means of knowing whether they are attempting to fly from a cruel husband or to get to Paddington by 6.30, but in either case I should like to help them. And sometimes I think I do, for I have noticed that if they happen to catch my eye as they speed past they sink back immediately into the interior of the cab and become cool and mysterious again. I suppose I have a soothing influence on people I care for.

I am also frequently repelled by faces I see in cabs. There is a sort of fat man in a blue suit who is always getting into cabs just ahead of me. I fancy this man pays his driver half-a-crown for a two-and-sixpenny journey and then debits his firm for "Fare (including tip) three shillings." In fact I am sure of it. He bets a good deal. He wears stiff turn-down collars with brown stripes on them. (Fact!) He says "Old boy" repeatedly when drinking, which he does in his bath and out of it, and he always gets the last seat in trains. Some say he is in the Black Market, but I wouldn't know. He's pretty careful and probably contents himself with keeping more hens than he's entitled to. He wouldn't go short of an egg if the whole success of his urban district's salvage drive depended on it. You might say he was the most unpleasant man in the world, if there weren't so many of him about.

There is also a kind of universal aunt, who travels endlessly in cabs. I mean no disrespect by this to the excellent institution of Universal Aunts who help people to get from Charing Cross to Liverpool Street without loss of self-respect (a difficult job this, since it means going into the City). All I am saying is that this person looks like what everybody's aunt looks like, or used to look like in the days when aunts were aunts. She is tallish and thin and severe. There are, however, more serious charges to bring against her. Chief, that she has the knack of appearing to be paying the driver off when in fact she has just engaged him—a diabolical trick. The result of this is that one stands with a hand on the door till she has finished her negotiations, just to make sure that nobody else gets the cab, finds too late that she is about to enter the vehicle, and has, for want of any better way of explaining one's presence, to open the door for her. She may or may not point out to one, as she gets in, that she never gives tips. I put it to the Government that this kind of thing ought to be prohibited by an Order in Council. There is no excuse whatever for holding long conversations with the driver before the journey, however much it may be necessary afterwards. This lady, it is credibly reported, does both, but I myself am only present at the encounter which precedes the drive.

Even when this lady is in transit, as inevitably she sometimes is between conversations, I do not greatly relish her appearance. She has an air of despising those who lack the initiative or the cunning or the cash required to travel in cabs. She is in no way so evil as the fat man in the blue suit. I admit that. Her hens, whom she greatly resembles, undoubtedly come within the scale laid down. But she ought to be compelled to travel by London Transport.

I should not care to be whirled away in a cab with either of these two persons.

Among faces which I do not like to see in cabs I think I ought to include one more. I remember catching sight of it one day last summer in a small mirror behind a little vase of artificial flowers which my driver had very kindly put in the cab for me. I was late and hot and returning from leave, and I had with me a great accumulation of luggage, and those I suppose were the reasons why the eyes appeared to be starting out of the head and the mouth kept opening and shutting in a stranded way. But why the unearthly pallor and why was the hair so disordered and streaky? It was my own face, I admit that. But I don't want to catch sight of it in a cab again.

H. F. E.

Write to Your M.P.

"While thunder roared over the city like heavy artillery, two inches of snow fell in parts of Fairview, Kitsilano and lower Shaughnessy Tuesday afternoon.

It was decidedly a freak storm and no official explanation of the phenomenon is forthcoming."—*Vancouver Daily Province*.



"You look positively stunning to-night. I understand you look after the leave-passes in the orderly-room."



"Well, I don't think the Milk Distribution Scheme was meant to work out like this."

How to Pay for the War

IN a recent letter to *The Times* Mr. G. Bernard Shaw let the economic cat out of the bag. He said, very simply, that the saving which would result from the dropping of one letter from a commonly-used word would pay for the war in a few months. I received this news very sceptically. Surely, I thought, this is just another bit of Shavian leg-pulling. Aha, I laughed, the genial old script-writer is up to his old tricks again. And then in a flash I realized the full implications of his statement. One letter dropped (by everybody) from one common word would save enormous quantities of ink, paint, paper, metal, time and labour. I want the reader to believe me when I say that the idea is sound economically. I don't want to go deeply into it to-day. All I will say is that Scotland's

poverty is probably due to her retention of the rolled "r," and that really successful business men seldom sound any aitches.

What alarms me is the possibility of the device becoming common knowledge among the nations of the earth. It seems to me that if two letters are dropped we can pay for two wars, three letters three wars, and so on. In that case China seems to have an immense potential and a significant advantage. Wars are like any other commodity, subject to the laws of supply and demand. Make them cheap enough and everybody will have them. And keep on having them until in the end so many letters have been dropped from so many words in so many languages that there are no written treaties or pacts left to break.

If we keep the idea to ourselves we can do more than pay for the war. We have expensive commitments in the post-war years. By dropping one vowel altogether we should be able to pay for the lot—at one go.

And let us start right now. I'm sure Lord Kindersley and Sir Kingsley Wd would be among the first to welcome the suggestion.

○ ○

Phantom Fleet

"(6) Comedy by from the ships that salute the arrival of Henry Arthur Jones."
Weekly paper.

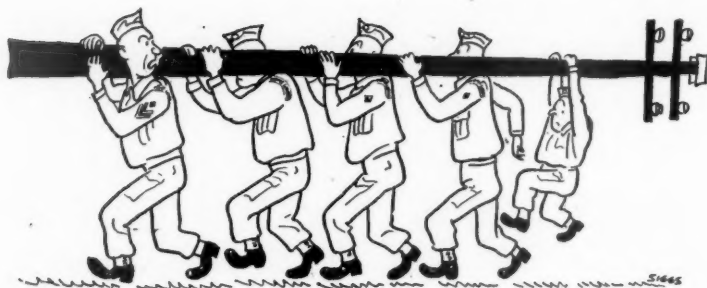
○ ○

"Gardener wtd immed lawn to be cut badly."—*Advt. in suburban paper.*
He'd better come on his bicycle.



ADOLF DEFYING THE LIGHTNING

"All the same I don't like it—it seems to come from all sides at once."



"Somebody isn't pulling his weight."

First Flight

WE are airborne. For the first time we are airborne.

Well, that is not quite true. We have been airborne twice before, when they picked up our little ship with a crane, swung us over the dock-side and put us down, very delicately and skilfully, in a dry dock, under the stern of a much more important vessel. That was fun. It was fun—because it was against the rules for any of the crew to remain on board during the operation—and because we had such perfect confidence in the crane-man who, like most of his kind, was an artist—and because there was a limit, the chain, to what he could do with us.

But that, we confess, could scarcely be described as flying. We are now flying for the first time. And flying to Scotland.

Extraordinary. How many years has all this flying been going on? We can remember Blériot arriving suddenly on the cliffs of Dover (or somewhere)—and how excited we were. We remember those gallant knights Alcock and Brown making the first flight across the Atlantic—and how excited we were. Earlier—or was it later?—we remember making a special journey to Brooklands to see a Frenchman called Paulhan (was it?) flying upside-down—and how excited we were. It is odd to think that the brave boys who do most of the flying now (and think nothing at all of flying upside-down) do not remember these things at all. For it must be—what?—nearly twenty-five years since Alcock and Brown flew the Atlantic. Blériot's exciting swoop across the Channel must have been some years earlier. And at twenty-five, in these days, an airman is a veteran.

All this time, all through this revolutionary quarter of a century, we have stood aloof from the main revolution, from the thing that has turned more things upside-down than anything else. It was never necessary for us to be airborne (apart from the two incidents already mentioned; and even then it wasn't necessary). And we never went out of our way to be airborne. We confess that we have always faintly disapproved of flying. We have been one of those simple souls who said that if God had intended us to be airborne he would have given us wings. To which, of course, you may reply that if God had intended us to burrow under the ground and make mines and underground railways he would have given us little furry paws like rabbits. And if he had intended us to go about under the surface of the sea in submarines he would have given us fins and gills, like fish. You may think that that is a logical, effective, and indeed a crushing answer. But it is not. Well, it may be logical, but it does not crush us. We still think the world would have been a better place if brave old Blériot had remained at Boulogne—or come across in a Channel steamer.

That was another thing. In peacetime people like George used to say: "Why not pop over to Paris—airborne?" Well, no, "airborne" was not a Word of the Day then. "Why not fly over to Paris?" they said. "You miss all the Customs fuss, and the queues, and the steamer, and all those French porters tearing you to pieces at Boulogne. You miss two train-journeys. You miss—"

"Miss" is the word," we would interject at this point. "We should miss all those things. We like the

change of gear from English to French, even if the gears do crunch a little. We like the battle for deck-chairs and stewards on the boat, in which we show ourselves so clever and experienced. We like the sea-journey, the debates about sea-sickness, the triumph when one is not. We like the assaults of the French porters and the exhausting encounters of the Douane. It is all part of the game. And when at last you sink into your seat in the Paris train, complete with wife, family, tickets, passports, and even luggage, you feel that you *deserve* a holiday. Miss all this easy flying—"

"Ah, but the time!" George would break in. "Look at the time we save!"

"If we have not enough time," we would reply rather pompously, "to go to Paris in the proper way, we will not go to Paris till we have."

For all these good reasons, and others which we now forget, we have never before been airborne. And here we are, airborne at last.

We have not been airborne for very long. Indeed, if the pilot is not very careful, we feel, we may still hit the houses ahead of us. Good, he has been careful; and we have not. Already we can look down on all the houses in the neighbourhood, which are numerous; and we can see a motor-car going along a street.

At this point, we feel, we should have a sense of elation, of ecstasy. The business of becoming airborne was not nearly so alarming as we expected, and now we should be rejoicing in the mastery of Man over Nature, delighting in the distant view of London and the Home Counties (we can see St. Paul's far away), and feeling ourselves immensely superior to the few poor earth-bound creatures we see in the suburb below.

As a matter of fact we do not feel any of these. As a matter of fact we have often seen the roofs of a lot of suburbs before, from the tops of high buildings; and we never thought much of it as a view. It seems no better to-day. Suburban streets, seen from the ground, can be pretty and cheerful; but this is like looking at an enormous suburban map, and nothing could be more depressing than that. It is no wonder that the gods of all the ages have had a poor opinion of the human race, for this is just the view they get of our habitations.

We, on the other hand, so far from feeling superior to the humans below, feel faintly ridiculous and out of place. Yes, believe it or not, so far, that is our main impression of flying; we feel rather absurd.

Perhaps that is because the machine in which we sit is small (or seems small to us) and the wing to our right keeps swaying up and down over the roofs. We feel like a child doing a very public see-saw, early in the morning, when everybody else is working. We feel—yes, out of place.

Perhaps all will be better when we are out over the open country.

Already we are out over the open country. But we have the same impressions. We now look down upon the tops of trees and the backs of sheep. This is not the best way of seeing a tree—or even a sheep. The fields are very numerous and green; but not more green than they look from the top of a hill. We still roll a bit, and from time to time the ship drops a little and hits something with a bump. We are not alarmed. We do not feel sick. The motion is rather like that of a small vessel in Sea Reach of the River Thames in rough weather, though not so regular. But it gives us no sense of the mastery of Man over Nature. We have complete confidence in our pilot; and the machine, which is His Majesty's, must be a good one. We know, by hearsay and observation, that this is the normal way of travel in the air. But if we were to go by sensations we should not be at all surprised if the machine dropped straight to the ground at the very next bump.

And, goodness, what very brave men were the pioneers! For they must have had the same sensations without the same cause for confidence. Old Blériot, for example; how he must have bumped and swayed over the Channel! And how ridiculous he must have felt!

Maybe in a bomber or a Spitfire one has more sense of the mastery of man. We must try that one day.

Well, we trundle along, bumping and making a good deal of noise. Trundle? Yes. Our passage seems absurdly slow. George says we are doing about a hundred and forty miles an hour; and we never travelled as fast as that before. But it seems a crawl. Every five minutes we pass over a golf-course or an airfield. People we pass over do not so much as look up at us, which we resent. Ahead is a large town. What is it? We have not the faintest idea. George has not the faintest idea. Henry has not the faintest idea. We have no map. If we were in a train we should see the

name on the station. If we were in a car we could stop and ask. Up here we just stare at the town, frustrated.

More bumping. More airfields. More golf-courses. More bad views of sheep and trees. We are now veteran fliers and have lost interest in our sensations. We should like to read a book. But is it the done thing to read in the air? Would it be properly respectful to man's greatest triumph? Probably not. We should like to blow our nose. But we do not think we can get at a handkerchief because of the parachute harness in the midst of which we sit, feeling rather like an unimportant parcel. We cannot converse because of the noise. We must just sit still and look at the top-decks of sheep and cows. They said it would take us only four hours to our destination. "Only"!

More bumping. What is the old catch-phrase with "bumping" in it? "Bumping and something." "Bumping and—boring." Heavens, what a horrid thought! But we cannot keep it away. Other irreverent persons have told us the same thing. We refused to believe it; but there it is. When it is not alarming this is a boring way of going about.

Underline "When it is not alarming". Bumping about in fog, cloud or heavy rain, one imagines, must be much less boring.

Well, may it always be boring! And let us give thanks to all those who have laboured and dared so much to make it boring. Thank you, too, Mr. Pilot, for making it boring to-day. Another flying-field. Good gracious, we have taken a heavy list to port. "Banking,"

they call it, we believe. We must be going down.

George, what is this place? D——? But why are we going down? We thought we were going to lunch in Scotland. The weather in Scotland is too bad for flying? What happens now, then? We get on to a train? The weather is not too bad for the train? When shall we be there? Lunch-time to-morrow? A day behind schedule? But if we had taken the night-train last night we should have been there for lunch to-day. And this is what you call "saving time"? Well, well.

Anyhow, we are going down. Now, this, they all told us, is the really alarming part of the first flight. Perverse again, we must say that it is the only part we have really enjoyed. At last the sense of mastery, the sense of grace and artful control. We are pretty sure, we think, to take the roofs off those small houses, but never mind, they are not very good houses. Going down. It reminds us of tobogganing, of the water-chute at the old Earl's Court Exhibition. This, we perceive, is the childish delightful essence of it all. Sliding down a hill without hitting anything at the bottom. Going down, going beautifully down. We have not hit the houses. Well done, sir. We have touched down. We are there. Thank you, sir.

We now understand why we see so many aircraft rising up from airfields, going once or twice round and then coming down again. It is just for the fun of coming down. This is the Big Toboggan.

The only thing is, we are now a day late.
A. P. H.



"Pretty good, don't you think, after only a month in the Wrens?"

The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this paper should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export.



"... So I said to him 'What you really need,' I said, 'is a Sergeant to look after you.'"

Diaries and Diaries

IT is now very difficult to get books, except household ones which never fail to arrive and excite in the thoughtful mind the question: Why is the total what it is when every time you order anything you're told it's just gone off the market and you can't have it? To this question there is probably no answer at all, so don't bother about it but go straight on to the next question, which is about *Old English Diaries*.

Why did the old English keep so many and such long diaries? This, again, is practically unanswerable, but they did; and what is more, we shall never know how many of them did, because it wasn't in more than some nine thousand and forty-seven cases that the diary, in fourteen volumes, was eventually discovered concealed under the kitchen pump, edited, and given to the world. Have you been able to escape reading some, at least, of these annals?

It is all the (unobtainable) oranges of China to (what is left of) Lombard Street that you haven't.

You remember how it all goes?

"Mighty fine day. Rose late and breakfasted with old Tom Buttermuslin, who was much put out that we sat down to nothing but cold chine of beef, potted rabbit and bacon, a loaf of new bread, much fresh butter, cream and honey and some French beer. Said that he would not have set such mean fare before me for the whole world had he but known of my coming. Made the best of it that I could and assured him that I live very plain by choice. Tom Buttermuslin still much out of countenance, but recovered on my reading to him my Cousin Martha's Verses on an Evening of Early Spring in the Vicinity of Bourne Mouth.

"Rode home slowly at mid-day, going round by Lower Prattle to look at a house that my great-aunt's

step-father, whom I never knew, since he died of a quinsy before I was born, is said to have thought of purchasing. Unfortunately this house is not visible from any part of the road, but I believe that a small iron gate in a fragment of wall that I passed had some connection with it. Remained looking at it for some little while."

What difference do you observe between this diary and the one kept by you or me, if we ever had any time to waste?

"Took down black-out, dining-room blind gone wrong again. No eggs. Managed with porridge but milk gave out and baker did not deliver. A.R.P. all morning, ate same old paste sandwiches for lunch, walked to Committee-meeting in village and back again, put up black-out. Front bedroom blind gone wrong again. Knocked up by police who said light was showing."

You see what I mean?

In case you don't, take another look

at old Tom Buttermuslin's friend or, more probably, crony.

"Summoned Sukey to my room soon after daybreak as I wished to mark the twentieth anniversary of her faithful service in my house. Gave her a shilling in silver and a half-yard of good black bombazine, saying that I was much pleased with her and that she had baked, brewed, washed, scrubbed, mended, put up the preserves, polished the furniture and cooked and served the meals well, besides tending my nine children since the lamented loss of my late wife. Sukey much overcome, and curtsied several times. To-day being my second-cousin Bob's birthday, I sent him an hogshead of Portuguese wine, said to be not unlike English port, ordering the gardener to carry it to Cousin Bob's house by the moorland road, this being steeper, but shorter by four and a half miles, than the turnpike. Played on my flute for several hours, and felt greatly refreshed afterwards. Mr. Maugrey, with his wife and two daughters, to supper, also the curate. Had veal broth, a dish of mutton chops, roasted fowls, a raised pie with stuffed marrows, stewed pigeons and cucumber. Also apricot tarts, and a dish of curds and whey. The whole will set me back some twelve or thirteen shillings, I doubt not.

"Much merriment occasioned by Mrs. Maugrey catching her foot on the stairs and falling over backwards, knocking down the curate. All went home soon after tea, I attending them to the gate. Ordered Sukey to bring me two blue pills and a draught of rhubarb and senna so soon as I had got into bed."

Here again your diary—and also mine—differs more than a trifle from the one we have just been quoting.

"Advertised again but no answers. Mrs. Hox says she can't come again after Thursday. Doesn't know of anybody else in the village, as girls all going into the Services.

"Gardener called up to-day.

"Robinsons to tea. Brought their own margarine and wouldn't eat any potato-scones. Just as well, as these a failure.

"P.G.s went to bed early and used all the hot water. Two A.T.S. billetees expected to-morrow. All four turned up at midnight.

"Got to bed at one-thirty, tired. Set alarm-clock for six-thirty."

So there you are.

Now perhaps you understand the fascination (word supplied by the Publishers' Association) of reading old English diaries. Or perhaps, on the other hand, not. E. M. D.

A Warning to the West Wind

OF FAIR West Wind who, whether in wild moods
Hurling upon our fields your host of showers
And stripping their bright glory from the woods,
Or murmuring among the early flowers,
Has had your place among those mighty powers
That all mankind has honoured hitherto,
Hitler is making plans to poison you.

ANON.



"Here's another building we shall have to keep a special eye on to-night. THEY haven't any fire-watchers either."

At the Play

"LIVING ROOM" (GARRICK)
 "THE MOON IS DOWN" (WHITEHALL)
 "THE RUSSIANS" (PLAYHOUSE)
 "SWEET AND LOW" (AMBASSADORS)

Most light-comedy writers, howsoever successful in that medium, aspire at least once in their careers to the writing of a quite serious play. It is now the turn of Miss ESTHER McCracken, who gave us *Quiet Wedding* and *Quiet Week-End*, so to aspire. *Living Room*, especially at the beginning and the end of the evening, is manifestly the work of the same author, since we have here the same atmosphere of agreeable, middle-class, and often quite witty fuss. But the core of *Living Room* is so serious and has become by the beginning of the Third Act so involved in its own seriousness that we become quite concerned as to how the playwright is going to extricate herself from her own difficulties. Sympathetically concerned, though, since Miss McCracken can write for the theatre and therefore engages the playgoing mind however far she journeys out of her wonted way.

What are some of those difficulties? They include the problem of two dear old maids who have been living quite comfortably all their lives on the rents of some slum houses. The slum is condemned and no compensation is offered to the property-owners. The ladies are therefore faced with penury. The difficulties also include the problem of the husband of the old maids' maidservant—a good honest working man who has been out of work so long that his emaciated frame will no longer help him to do the only kind of heavy work of which he is capable. Such problems as these can and could arise—especially in a congested north-country city in the year 1937, which is this play's declared date. And when well stated and presented they can be made to engage the mind of galleryite, dress-circleite, and even of your sybaritic critic lolling in his stall. Especially when you have good actresses like Miss LOUISE HAMPTON, Miss NELLIE BOWMAN, and

Miss EILEEN BELDON to be the old maids and Meggie the maidservant respectively, Mr. CHARLES LAMB vividly to underline the pathos of the unemployable unemployed, and other clever people like Mr. LLOYD PEARSON and Miss JANE BAXTER whose subsidiary problems we are by this time too depressed to examine.

It is brave, of course, of Miss McCracken to face the fact that life is not all weddings and week-ends, that there are dismal Mondays and shiftless Thursdays as well. The value of her

feminine of Miss McCracken to think that it answers any of the questions she has raised. If you find your kitchen seething with cockroaches you do not solve the problem of exterminating them by shutting the kitchen door and returning to your comfortable drawing-room shrugging your shoulders and saying: "Things must be somehow!" *Living Room* says "Things must be somehow!" and says nothing else.

But both *The Moon is Down* and *The Russians* say that there is a tremendous and thornily complicated war waging, and say it with the most lurid and resonant effectiveness. The one gives Mr. JOHN STEINBECK's American view (stated before America's entry) and the other M. KONSTANTIN SIMONOV's Russian view (set down when its young author was in the actual field of battle). If these plays have to be compared one would say that the first is better art and the second better melodrama. But both plays are rich in momentous incident, and in both the enemy is not made to seem improbable. There are, too, some sterling performances. In the Steinbeck Mr. LEWIS CASSON as a martyred Mayor, Mr. W. E. HOLLOWAY as his gentle doctor-friend, and Mr. KAREL STEPANEK as a Nazi Colonel with some hopeful misgivings about him. In the Simonov Mr. MICHAEL GOLDEN and Miss FREDJA JACKSON as guerrilla fighters, Mr. RUSSELL THORNDIKE as a quisling, Miss OLGA LINDO as his harrowed wife who feels obliged to betray him, and Mr. ARTHUR HAMBLING who walks to certain death as proudly as Fortinbras's army.

After all this strong drink *Sweet and Low*, the new revue for Miss HERMIONE GINGOLD and Mr. WALTER CRISHAM, is the very best black coffee, served with a witty liqueur. This is a mordantly satirical show for sophisticates, especially for such sophisticates as know our most fashionable actors and actresses only by their first names. Its matter is always firmer than its music, but both the leading players are an unholy joy in nearly everything they sing, dance, or suggest. A. D.



COUNTING THEIR BLESSINGS.

Miss Vicky Benton	MISS LOUISE HAMPTON
Sam Morrow	MR. LLOYD PEARSON
Miss Deborah Benton	MISS NELLIE BOWMAN
Molly Benton	MISS JANE BAXTER
Dr. David Blake	MR. PHILIP CUNNINGHAM

play is that it reminds us of these asperities in good forcible dramatic fashion. Its weakness is that it does not even begin to breathe a hint of a solution to either problem. What happens? One old maid puts on her bonnet and goes over the road to have a cosy chat with that nice stern-looking master-builder; she knows how to cajole him into giving Meggie's husband a lighter job. And both old maids suddenly discover that they have half a dozen spare rooms in their house and that they have no very great aversion to letting out lodgings. This clears the murky air and makes a comparatively gay last Act. But it is, if we may say so, just charmingly

Cooking

COOKING, as all my readers well know, began when primitive man first cooked something. Since then cooking has gone on and on and is now recognized both as an *art*, or something which people are either good or bad at, and a *science*, or something which those people who are bad at could be good at if only they were better at. Statisticians tell us, however, that neither definition represents the average attitude to the subject, and that most people would define cooking as the cause of washing up.

Cooking is carried on mainly by means of saucepans, and saucepans are so interesting that I should like to say a few words about them. Saucepans have lids, but no one can be sure if these lids were actually sold with the saucepans or were bought afterwards to fit them, because several lids often fit one saucepan, just as several saucepans often fit one lid. Saucepans are kept on a row of hooks, fitting on to them by the holes in the handles, and the holes in saucepan handles are angled so that to fit saucepans on to hooks the saucepan has to be held ten feet from the ground and the handle aimed slowly at the hook. Scientists do not know why this is, but say that the idea may be to make it no less difficult to get a saucepan off a hook than on it. The lids are kept vertically in a rack, with the biggest lid, by the telepathic consent of the household, in either the top rung or the bottom; this is to facilitate choosing a lid to fit a particular saucepan, the lid needed being always the one either above or below the gap left by the lid first chosen.

On the whole most people nowadays cook with stoves, and most stoves have tops and insides, the insides being known as ovens and treated with great respect by people who do not cook; psychologists say that this respect is really due to the people who work the oven, but gets transferred to the oven itself, and that there is a lot of this sort of thing in cooking, people being notably ready to transfer self-reproach to milk which has boiled over. The interesting thing about the top of a stove, if it is a gas stove, is that each tap relates to a different burner, and if we follow the pipe along from the tap to the burner we can tell which tap relates to which burner, but not unless. Psychologists tell us that whoever invented the original pattern for gas stoves did so with a definite purpose; that anyone about to start cooking, and getting the right tap to work the right burner, shall thereby be given just that extra half-ounce of self-confidence which makes all the difference to successful cooking.

Now for a few of the simple basic cooking processes. First, of course, comes boiling a kettle, which is so simple as not to count as cooking at all. Even so, to boil a kettle calls for a certain range of the emotional gamut reserved for cooks; beginning, especially if the kettle is electric, with a sort of deferred pessimism, and ending, especially if a kettle boils outdoors, with a suddenly-released optimism. Next to boiling a kettle it is probably easiest to boil an egg, but only if whoever is boiling the egg is going to eat it, when the whole thing is what psychologists call pretty easy. Conversely, to boil an egg for someone else is so difficult as to be foolhardy, and is only made possible by that natural intolerance in all of us which tells us that anyone who likes an egg harder or softer boiled than we ourselves do is not worth bothering about the good opinion of anyway.

Now we come to perhaps the most basic process of all: what is known as *watching the potatoes*. Potatoes are

watched in a saucepan with a lid on; that is, the potatoes are in the saucepan and the people watching them can only do so by lifting the lid and keeping out of the way of the steam. Centuries of potato-watching have given potato-watchers an instinct about steam, and another instinct which tells them when the potatoes look what is called nearly done; that is, ready to have a knife or fork stuck into them. There is a rule that potato-watchers shall stick a knife or fork into the potatoes several times before they are actually done, and another rule that when they are nearly done the potato-watchers shall be as excited as if the potatoes were quite done; the idea being that whoever is really doing the cooking takes over all responsibility for the potatoes at the stage when the potato-watcher gets excited, leaving the potato-watcher free to mix the mustard or do anything else about up to a potato-watcher's standard. I should perhaps mention here that there is only one way to make mustard, and that is to start with not enough mustard, add not enough water, add to this too much water and finish up with what the mustard-maker hopes is about the right amount of mustard.

A few more hints which may make cooking easier. People who lean against kitchen doors and ask if they can help—these are the class of people from which potato-watchers are usually recruited—are also good for the simpler kinds of vegetables but not always qualified as stirrers, because stirring needs more than just goodness of heart, which is often all such people have. This goodness of heart is never more exemplified than when such people are asked to fetch a tin or bottle of anything specific from a cupboard, because such people will stand in the cupboard and call out the names on all tins or bottles of almost everything else in their zeal to find out what you want. Such people, again, will never bring out a jar of salt without warning you that it may be washing-soda, and such people are often right. Finally, lettuce may not count strictly as cooking, but here is a very useful hint. It is as safe to put the inside bits of a lettuce on the top of a salad as at the bottom; I mean, people are no more or less likely to take them or not to take them—the sort of people who automatically take only the inside bits of a lettuce being the sort of people who automatically look through the whole salad to find them, and the sort who take only the outside leaves being also that way anyhow. Psychologists tell us that the whole thing is so closely allied to heredity and upbringing that the mere arrangement of a lettuce makes no difference.

IN A GOOD CAUSE

KING GEORGE'S Jubilee Trust has always worked through the principal national juvenile organizations. In war-time, the policy of the Trust has been to give them every possible help, and its financial backing is a very important factor in their activities. Since 1935 it has paid out £425,000 in grants, £154,000 of this in the last four years. But, in spite of many economies, the funds are now dwindling at a moment when they are most urgently needed. Mr. Punch recommends this Good Cause to his generous readers; the address is King George's Jubilee Trust, St. James's Palace, London, S.W.



"Except for the unrelated participle, the double negative and the two split infinitives, my story agrees almost word for word with Jackson's."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Harriet Martineau

LIKE Dr. Johnson, Harriet Martineau suffered permanently from the after-effects of being put out to nurse with a woman in ill health. She was never able to taste food, except once, in adult life, when the flavour of a leg of mutton suddenly, to her great delight, became perceptible to her. Her digestion was permanently enfeebled, and from her late teens onwards she was almost completely deaf. In childhood she was a prey to nervous fears which her mother dismissed as affectations designed to attract attention to herself. The magic lantern used when her parents gave a children's party terrified her, and there was a walk over the Castle Hill at Norwich which she dreaded because the people at the foot of the hill used to beat their feather-beds with sticks, and when she looked down at them the fact that the blows and the sounds did not quite synchronize seemed obscurely sinister. In spite, or possibly because, of this bad start, she developed into a courageous and hard-working woman, and though her didactic uninspired writings are no longer interesting her life and character are well worth the careful and sensitive treatment given them in this well-written and well-proportioned study (*Harriet Martineau*, by JOHN CRANSTON NEVILL. FREDERICK MULLER, 5/-). When she was twenty a Unitarian magazine accepted an article from her, and two or three years later, her family having been impoverished in the post-war slump of the eighteen-twenties, she set to work in earnest. Her *Illustrations of Political Economy*, a

series of tales designed to enforce economic lessons, had a European as well as an English success in the 'thirties. Louis Philippe directed that they should be translated into French, and the Tsar distributed them in great numbers among his subjects. It was characteristic of Harriet Martineau that the enthusiasm of these sovereigns did not prevent her from celebrating the Fall of the Bastille in one of her tales, and denouncing the treatment of Polish exiles in Eastern Siberia in another, after which her writings were withdrawn from circulation in France and Russia, and she herself was forbidden to set foot within the Tsar's dominions. America fell out with her when she supported the Abolitionist movement, and her English public cooled towards her when she advocated what her brother, James Martineau, denounced as "the New Atheism." But nothing daunted her for long, and she had a permanent source of happiness in her farm at Ambleside, where she dispensed a generous hospitality to visitors, in spite of Wordsworth's advice to her to give a cup of tea to callers, but to charge them if they asked for meat.

H. K.

Introducing Mary Lavin

LORD DUNSANY, enthusiastically presenting *Tales from Bective Bridge* (JOSEPH, 8/6), asserts that the mechanism of these enchanting short stories is to that of the modern thriller as the works of a gold watch to the machinery of a factory. This is true, even though it is not possible for each of a series of eleven to attain the exquisite efficiency of the four best. The four best, however, are representative of four different veins, their unity depending less on the author's attitudes—which are youthfully varied and adventurous—than on the honesty and beauty with which each mode of perception grapples with a common theme. The theme is Ireland: the mystical Ireland, older than Christianity, that persists in "The Green Grave and the Black Grave"; the mystical Ireland wistfully Christianized that pervades "Brother Boniface"; the serio-comic Ireland of "Lilacs" in which gentility comes ruefully up against stark human needs; and the aristocratic Ireland of "Miss Holland," which portrays with exemplary severity the rift between magnanimous natures and base ones. One diagnoses Miss LAVIN—who is not Irish—as American. Even New England, notably as it has excelled in the short story, has done nothing better than this. H. P. E.

The Inner Light

The history of the Society of Friends is the record not of a rigid organization founded and maintained by a few men of genius, but of the persistence of a great idea held within a circle of worshippers bound together only by a common conception of the ultimate sources of inspiration and of the limitless fields of altruistic enterprise. Even George Fox, whose preaching gathered round him the first members of the sect in the stormy days of seventeenth-century religious intolerance, rather collected persons of like persuasion with himself than sought to make converts, and he maintained his belief in freedom of thought against himself no less than against others. Through a weary tale of hectoring persecution in this country and the early American states by those to whom a community devoid of visible authority seemed a dangerous anomaly, OTTO ZAREK carries this history—*The Quakers* (DAKERS, 10/6)—nearly to the present day. One may well have some complaint against him for not bringing it quite up to date in a world at war, and indeed the balance of his book would have been improved by taking from the troubles of Fox and Penn and the early stalwarts to give more attention

to modern vexations. Mankind to-day seems to lack little of the cheerful courage that sent the early Quakers, men or women, to challenge king or sultan in their courts, or to convert the Pope to Christianity, but we need perpetual reminders of the spirit of the peace-keepers, in the moral, industrial and economic problems that increasingly confront us.

C. C. P.

Last Man Off

Of all forlorn hopes, among imperial commitments prodigally undertaken and impossible to sustain, the defence of the Philippines was as hideous and as heroic as any. By an irony of fate, Lieutenant-Colonel CARLOS P. ROMULO, a well-known Filipino journalist, came hot from exposing English blunders in the Far East to drink his fill at Corregidor and Bataan of the greatest American reverse in history. One thing, however, differentiated the American story from ours: the natives were heart and soul with their one-time conquerors, whose status and freedom they shared. Colonel ROMULO was put in charge of the defence's radio and press relations. ("People can stand the truth," said General MacArthur.) And he endured four months of predestined defeat, among malaria, dysentery, gangrene and starvation, a Japanese price on his head, and his wife and children lost in Manila. Finally, under secret orders, a derelict flying-boat, made largely of spare parts fished up in the harbour, took him away as Bataan fell. On him were the last letters of comrades—who guessed but did not grudge him the rescue he had consistently spurned—together with the diary on which *I Saw the Fall of the Philippines* (HARRAP, 9/-) is so movingly and modestly founded.

H. P. E.

A Modern Pilgrim

In his introduction to Mr. HUGH MATHESON's *Puritan's Progress* (METHUEN, 12/6) Mr. L. A. G. STRONG finds the chief importance of the book in the fact that the author has not solved any of his problems. "He writes from the midst of them. He does not know where he stands. He does not even know whether his upbringing was good or bad." There is, however, a good deal to be said for a spiritual pilgrimage in which the traveller has a clear idea of the direction in which he wishes to go. Dante's poem would lose much if Dante were presented as rambling in and out of Paradise, Purgatory and the Inferno without being able to make up his mind which of the three he liked best. The progress of Bunyan's pilgrim would fix our attention less closely if Christian, after sighting the Delectable Mountains, felt a sudden nostalgia for the City of Destruction, and when the Celestial City came into view decided to give Vanity Fair another trial.

Mr. MATHESON was born in Lancashire of Scottish parents. His father and mother were both severely puritanical, and even when he was nearing thirty, and had just returned from the front, his father chided him for whistling on Saturday night—"My dear boy, isn't it time you settled yourself? I don't like to hear you whistling so near the Sabbath." Though of a somewhat pliable, easy-going nature, he was devoted to his parents, and knowing how they longed for him to be converted, he tried to open himself to the evangelizing efforts of the local and itinerant preachers whose services he attended. One of the best passages in his book, which though too facile and fluent contains much excellent descriptive writing, pictures the triumphant visit to his town of a famous evangelist. The author resisted his spells, and was converted somewhat later at an ordinary service. It appears, however, that the chief effect of his conversion was to stimulate his attraction towards women, and much of the book is concerned with

his vain attempts to shake off the cramping effect of his puritanical upbringing. After taking his degree at Manchester University he became a schoolmaster in Lincolnshire. Of a cheerful disposition and a good amateur actor, he was popular in the society of the place until it came out that he was not only a Wesleyan but a lay preacher, who sometimes delivered sermons in neighbouring villages. It is not quite clear what conclusions he drew from this experience, but the book ends with him as a journalist in London, rejoicing in the city's vast anonymity and social freedom.

H. K.

Blood and Iron

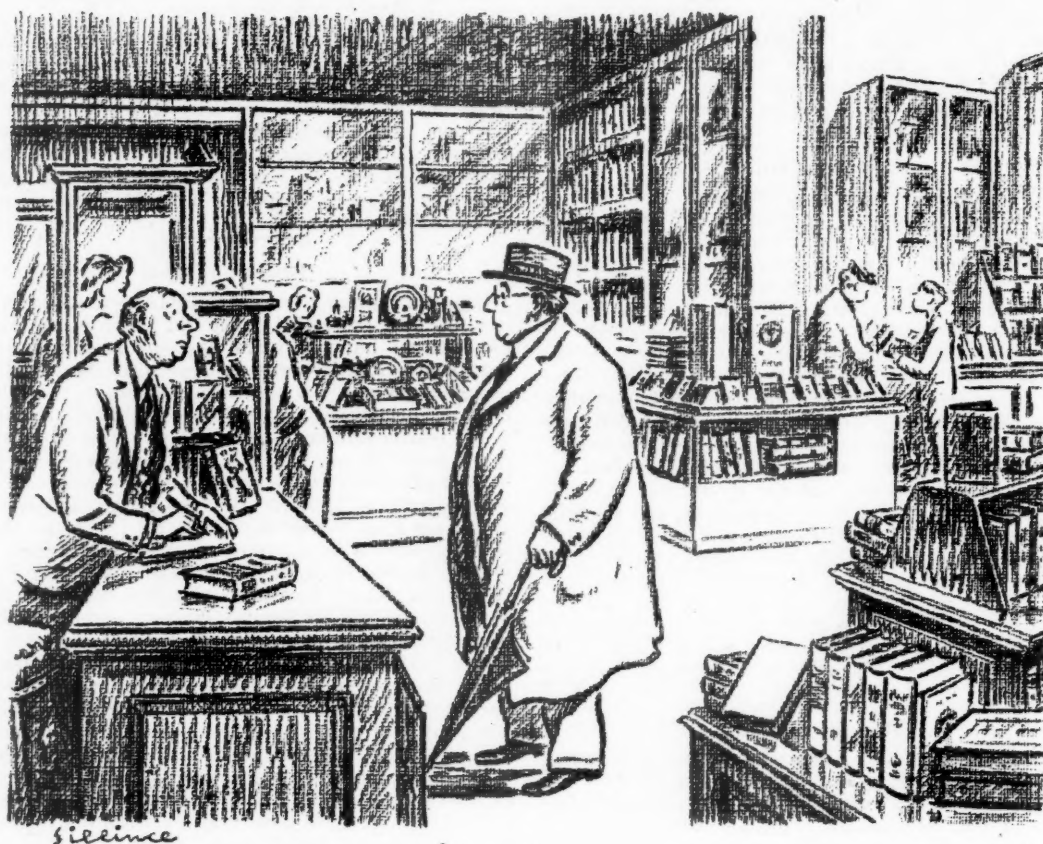
Otto von Bismarck, born at Schönhausen on April 1, 1815, came of a family settled in the Old March of Brandenburg for some six hundred years, and apt on that account to regard the Hohenzollerns as mere upstarts. In 1832 he matriculated as a law student at Göttingen. Seven years later he learned that his family were in financial difficulties. So he resigned from the Civil Service and spent another seven years in restoring the family's prosperity, buying back in the end the Schönhausen estate, which his father had been forced to sell. All these things, and more, you may learn from *Bismarck*, written by IAN F. D. MORROW (DUCKWORTH, 3/-), a handy volume in the Great Lives series. In 1847 he married, and was elected to the Prussian Diet. The future Imperial Chancellor confessed that in those days he was a "terrible Junker," and indeed he may be said to have remained one for the rest of a stormy life. But in 1862, when William I was on the verge of abdicating rather than surrender his royal prerogative, Bismarck was hastily summoned from a holiday among the vineyards of Bordeaux and appointed Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs. Thenceforward Prussia had a master—a master who meant to make Germany united under his and Prussia's leadership. To accomplish this he employed all the methods that have been so faithfully followed by his successors. Treaties were made, and torn up as required: the war machine was prepared and exercised, beginning with the easiest victims: Germany was duly persuaded that she was being threatened or insulted. So in turn came Düppel, Königgratz, Sedan. Bismarck, however, was not so insatiable as his followers. He knew when to stop. Mr. MORROW has written a straightforward concise account of a life that had an enormous effect on the history of modern Europe.

L. W.



MAURICE McLOUGHLIN

"I like the way they walk about in queues."



"Can you get me an unexpurgated copy of the Beveridge Report?"

Our War-Time Query Corner

Ask Evangeline!

Q. Can you explain why it is that whenever circumstances compel me to share a taxi with strangers I invariably get one of the tip-up seats? I am a middle-aged marmalade manufacturer. My hobby is bird-watching.

(Mr.) SHIRLEY V. PINSTRIP.

A. There are some of us who seem born to sit on the tip-up seats of life, Mr. Pinstrip, while others effortlessly attract to themselves all the upholstered tit-bits. Dr. Vespasian Sweet's manual on the development of the personality may be of assistance if, in your case, the trouble is constitutional, though I am inclined to think from the way in which you make use of your leisure that yours is an austere disposition not altogether allergic to discomfort of posture. It may even be

that long association with the feathered world has bred a subconscious urge to *perch*, as it were. It would be interesting to know your reactions to worms and groundsel. In either case I consider you need to watch yourself, as one never knows where this sort of thing ends.

* * * * *

Q. The lady next door to us is very low-spirited as she has had some rhubarb jam on her mind since two years last August. She made fourteen pounds and put mouse poison in three of them so as to be ready for German parachutists coming to the back door, only unfortunately got them mixed the next afternoon when turning out the pantry, and now her husband, who is fond of rhubarb, keeps on saying when

is she going to open one. She daren't tell him her reasons now she hasn't had any parachutists at the back door as he was against the idea from the start and is liable to stop her money for pictures if he thinks she is wasting things. What should she do?

Mrs. BEATIE JINKS.

A. As the husband in question is not a mouse, I see no reason why your friend should not feed him with the jam if he wishes it. Any resultant discomfort could very easily be attributed to our English climate, over-indulgence at the local, etc.

* * * * *

Q. Does it not seem to you significant that the names of our chief leaders each include the letters in—

Winston, Franklin, Stalin? When I mentioned this to a colleague who sometimes thinks it rather clever to be sceptical about these little discoveries of mine, she at once pointed out that "Mussolini" also contained the letters "in." This was exactly what I was waiting for! "Ah," I said, "but in 'Mussolini' the 'i' is pronounced 'ee' and therefore does not rhyme with 'win'! Surely a lucky omen for the Allied nations?" PSYCHE.

A. Thanks a lot, Psyche. We are passing on your heartening bit of research to other readers.

* * * * *

Q. Our late Auntie May (a leading light of the Suburban Fish-Friers' Guild and lifelong halma player) stated in her will that she wished every one of her possessions to be devoted to the war effort. We have done all in our power to carry out this request, difficult as it has been, but find we have still on our hands a set of white-enamelled Venetian blinds, for which no one will make us an offer, and nineteen celluloid table notices with the legend: *Go Easy On The Vinegar*. What ought we to do with these? (Mrs.) ADA TEW.

A. Only the other day I heard of one well-to-do family of sisters who had been cutting up their old Venetian blinds to make T-squares for their friends. Might it not then be a rather pretty tribute to the tastes of the deceased if the blinds were in this capacity awarded as prizes for halma contests in some of the Services clubs? The table notices, I think, should be slipped into parcels of comforts destined for overseas, as these would serve to remind the boys of home.

* * * * *

Q. I seem to have fallen in error with my landlord as he tells me we cannot keep hens in a garden 12 feet by 7 without his permission and this he feels compelled to withhold, he says, for sanitary reasons. Had I known beforehand I would never have taken the house, for we have always been accustomed to our own eggs; in fact in the select neighbourhood from which we have just moved we at one time kept as many as four fowl-houses, though following an outbreak of roup and scaly leg, we gave these to help build a Y.W.C.A. hostel. In the meantime how am I to house the half dozen chicks (still in a cardboard box) which I bought under a misapprehension at last Saturday's market?

(Miss) MOPSY FLOXTON.

A. As you cannot keep them outside, mightn't it be fun to give them the run of the house? That is to say, have them running about quite naturally in the ground-floor rooms but train them to return at nightfall to some obvious base such as one of the lounge occasional-tables, inverted, lined with hay and banked with hot-water bottles to serve as foster-mother. You will need also to keep the hearth strewn with ashes for bathing purposes. Plate-racks, the tops of book-shelves and cabinets, hat-stands and your kitchen clothes-pulley will all make admirable roosting-places, but I would leave nesting arrangements until later when you will have had an opportunity to study your birds' marked preferences among the furnishings.

As time goes on you should find your days packed full of incident; and think of the fun and excitement of never knowing, when you sit down, whether you are going to come upon an egg under the cushion!

* * * * *

Q. My husband, always a keen sportsman, refuses to go to his cricket club this year as he lost his trousers in the laundry last September (flannels), and has no coupons. He says it is un-English to play games in anything but the correct costume. What do you think?

E. O'D. LAMPLOUGH-LUMB.

A. If he feels like that, he might take up poker, which requires no special trousers. This is played in shirt-sleeves, the hat being worn well on the back of the head and the waistcoat unbuttoned. While it is customary also to take off the tie, there are no fixed rules about removing the boots, though you might frequently find it done among experts.

* * * * *

Q. Can you tell us what the post-war novel is likely to be like? Addressing a literary meeting of the Prior's Pushcart Ladies' Study Circle, Professor W. V. S. Dibble-Bisbee said that in his opinion novelists of the past had been too conservative to draw upon those great untapped resources of fiction which he hoped soon to see exploited to the full. Though this seemed clear enough at the time, some of us have felt since that we are not perfectly certain as to his meaning.

(Miss) ZENOBIA KIDDIE.

A. He probably meant that he could not recall a single work of fiction in which the action had not centred around human beings. Human beings

are all very well in their way, but I certainly am looking forward to some gripping best-sellers of the future dealing with, say, the emotional life of a fern or the delicate interplay between a motor-car clutch and gear, or some powerful trilogy based upon the age-old conflict between the pancreatic juices. I do feel too that writers have hitherto been inclined to ignore whole cross-sections of society in their selection of characters. Where, for instance, is the novel in which the "hero" is either a weaver's tacker or a pursuivant of the College of Heraldry? The day is approaching, however, when furniture-removers, plate-layers, makers of carnival novelties, works' time-keepers, egg-sorters, trick cyclists, wheel-tappers and Yorkshire Relish tasters will, every one of them, come into their own.

* * * * *

Q. My brother, one of an advanced art-loving set, left in my keeping before embarking for the Middle East a painting which he hoped to get exhibited. We now hear that it has been accepted by the Gaga Galleries, but, try as I may, I cannot think what Stacey told me it was to be called, and the exhibition opens early next month. Could you possibly suggest a title? The picture is really a former bath-mat of Grandma's (this, I believe, is not uncommon in arty circles) and shows a sort of blitzed dust-pan with some spring onions growing out of it, standing on top of a kneeling cleric of some kind who appears to be blowing into a bicycle-pump. In the background is what I think must be a large slice of coconut cake. The prevailing tone is shrimp-pink.

SISTER OF GENIUS.

A. Either *Tulip Time*, *Death Takes a Holiday*, *Mungo Park's Last Voyage*, or *Portrait of a Lady with Khaki Knees* would be appropriate.

Without Prejudice

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Podgy's Braces

"I'VE got ma braces on noo," announced young Podgy McSumph, who had arrived to accompany me on a morning stroll.

"Your first real braces, Podgy," I exclaimed, knowing that hitherto he had had to put up with a makeshift arrangement devised by his mother.

"Look—they're red yins," pulling up his jersey. "The man in the shop said red braces was the fashion."

"They look splendid."

"I ken," said Podgy. "Hoo old was Nelson when he got his first braces?"

"Perhaps he would be about the same age as you are."

"An' whit colour would they be?"

"Perhaps they were blue because he was going to be a sailor."

"But red braces is the best braces. I bet ye Wellington's was red." He strutted across the floor puffing out his chest. "This is Wellington walkin' about the battle wi' his braces."

As we left the house a little girl with a very short skirt and a very red face rushed up to us and exclaimed breathlessly, "Are ye comin' oot to play wi' me after yer dinner, Podgy?"

"No, I'm no'," snapped Podgy, and marched on with his head in the air.

"Who was that?"

"It was that Maggie Stoorie. But I'm no' goin' to play wi' girls any more," he growled. "It's just big boys I'm goin' to play wi' noo."

The statue in front of the Town Hall caught his eye, and he expressed the opinion that Sir William Wallace must have had iron braces for his "troosers."

Getting slightly bored with Podgy's braces, I drew his attention to the barrage balloons floating above the two tramp steamers in the bay.

"Whit's keepin' them up?" he asked.

A pale-faced shabbily dressed little man hurried past us. He was carrying an awkward load consisting of a ladder and a large pail.

"It's Pug Rooney," said Podgy, "goin' to wash the windies. Pug," he called, "I've got on ma braces."

"Lucky for you, Podgy," replied Mr. Rooney over his shoulder. "I'm a' tied up wi' string."

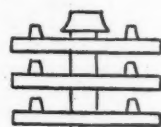
"Now, Podgy," I remonstrated, "what would your mother say if she heard you shouting after people in the street?"

"But hoo are they to ken I've got on ma braces?" retorted Podgy.

Shortly after that, however, we chanced upon a squad of soldiers who appeared to be making a trench, and Podgy immediately became absorbed in the fascinating sight. These hefty fellows, although they seemed to be rather up in years, were stripped to their shirts and trousers and digging with a furious tossing of picks and shovels that looked ominous.

"Maybe it's for a battle," murmured the gaping Podgy.

The sergeant-in-charge came forward. He was a brawny Cameron Highlander wearing the ribbon of the Mons Star.



Jackson

"Good mornin', Captain," he said, saluting Podgy. "Hoo are ye this mornin'?"

"Quite well, thank you," said Podgy. "Please, whit kind o' sodgers is these?"

"These," said the sergeant, "is pioneer sodgers."

"An' when is the war to be here?"

"I daren't for ma life tell ye that."

"But whit is the sodgers diggin' for?"

"That's a secret as weel," said the sergeant. "But, maybe—Noo, ye're no' to let on about this." He bent down. "They're diggin' holes," he whispered.

"I'll no' tell naeboddy," Podgy promised solemnly. "An' do they just get diggin'?" he asked. "Do they no' get fightin' anybody?"

"Like masel," said the sergeant, "they're a wee bit auld for fightin'. I keep them maistly for diggin'."

"An' are they always diggin'?"

"These chaps," said the sergeant impressively, "if I didn't stop them for their meals would dig richt doon to Australia."

Podgy looked thoughtful. "An' could I get bein' one o' these kind o' sodgers?" he inquired.

"Noo, that," said the sergeant judiciously, "I think would be a mistake. Stout young chaps like you is wanted in the front line—for fightin'."

"But I would like to be one o' these kind o' sodgers," pleaded Podgy, his eyes fixed intently on the sweating pioneers.

"No," said the sergeant, shaking his head, "I'm sorry, but I doot I couldn't let ye join us. I want to see ye shoulderin' a gun an' workin' up to be a general."

"Quite right, sergeant," I said heartily. "Podgy must be a fighting soldier."

We resumed our walk, Podgy looking very disgruntled.

"What's worrying you now?" I asked.

"Ye said I wasn't to shout at the folk about ma braces," he grumbled. "An' noo," giving me a reproachful look, "ye'll no' let me join the diggin' sodgers."

"But why do you want to do that?"

"Because if I was a diggin' sodger everybody would get seein' ma braces theirselves."

"Ah! So that's it?"

"Aye," said Podgy, "because diggin' sodgers gets goin' without their jackets." D.

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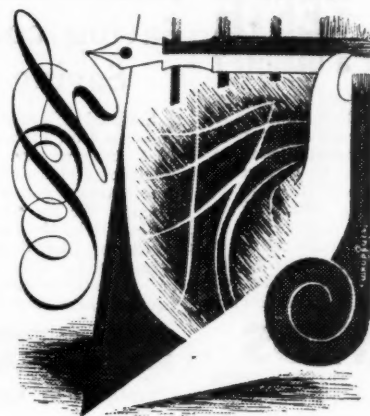
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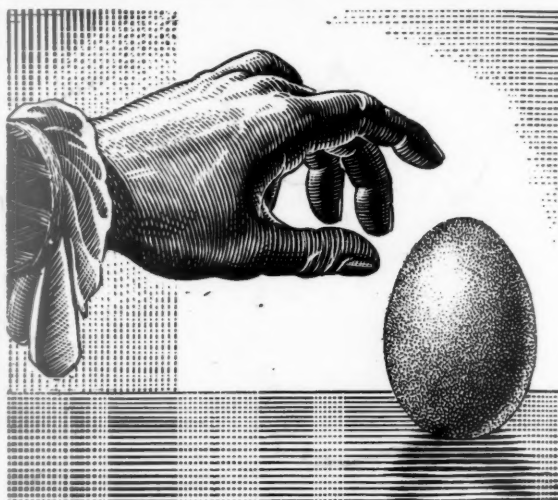
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